ACCESS AND USE OF E-RESOURCES BY FACULTY MEMBERS AND STUDENTS IN ECONOMICS: A STUDY OF SELECT UNIVERSITIES IN DELHI

SYNOPSIS

Submitted for the registration to Doctor of Philosophy in Department of Library & Information Science, University of Delhi, Delhi

Submitted By

Suboohi Siddiqui

Department of Library and Information Science

University of Delhi, Delhi

2012

1. INTRODUCTION

The library is seen as a source of training and guidance to a community of learners who are concerned with navigating the complexities of locating and using digital resources and services. Moreover, the move towards a digital environment has resulted in a shift from the systematic one-to-one information flow of the past to a new model in which the users and the providers of information are able to relate in a many-to-many, dynamic relationship (Sharifabadi 389-401). Owing to the technological revolution and advent of modern information and communication technologies (ICT), the students' community no longer relies upon the traditional library services. They are, however, encouraged to trust in electronic resources with a presumption that, the wealth of information available in electronic formats can utterly accomplish their scholastic needs as a better substitute to traditional print services. Moreover, students can have direct access to electronic information with consistency and a guarantee of equity of access. Besides, students can get certain advantages in accessing electronic information like, quick browsing, compound access, retrieval speed, sharing, print and down loading, comprehensive information coverage, and more so. Further, they can take advantage of the multifarious growth of knowledge in different subjects by using electronic media, which is not possible by moving from library to library for physical tracking of these documents (Swain 580-91).

Electronic resources have placed themselves at the top priority in academic and research organizations, especially in developing countries. E-resources are not only the necessity of the time but also have become the face value of any academic institution. The concept of the library is changing very fast due to the impact of e-resources. Now libraries not only have printed material but also digital resources. The technology has forced the library to digitize information. Electronic resources have the advantage of being more current, and sometimes more comprehensive than comparable print equivalents. Major journal publishers such as Elsevier, Springer, and Wiley are now making hundreds of individual titles available online back to their very first issues. The titles are often grouped into broad subject categories that include engineering, medicine, biochemistry, agricultural, management, and even veterinary disciplines. Journal use statistics that were once gathered and reported for print journals are being used to lend support for purchase of more e-journals with a corresponding cancellation of print titles. The dawn of e-resources has drastically

changed the way of accessing the conserved information in databases, and provided marvellous speeds for retrieving it. During the last few decades growth and demand of information has been multiplied many times. With the revolution of e-resources, the activities, and operation, which were performed manually, are now being automated, thus enhancing the role and responsibility of librarians (Sharma, et.al. 803-16).

In the words of Saye (71-81), “electronic resources are the resources that are generated through some electronic medium and made available to a wide range of viewers both on-site and off-site via some electronic transferring machine or internet.” Therefore, electronic resources in its ambit include all kinds of digital collections in the form of e-books, e-articles, e-databases, e-journals, electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs), e-standards and patents, e-reports, e-news, etc. Moreover, ICT has enabled the transformation of electronic information services in the forms of e-assignments, e-terms papers, e-project reports in many educational institutions and universities all across the world which impels the students’ community to use electronic resources for the betterment of their academic needs.

The social science of course, is more than two hundred years old. The historical evolution of the social sciences in the last two hundred years is of special interest, nevertheless, because this the various disciplines as they are recognized today developed during this period and serious and penetrating questions were asked for the first time about the methods used in the social sciences and about their relation to each other and to other fields of scientific knowledge. The importance of efficient economic activity to the individual and to the community is not new. In earlier periods much stress was laid upon philosophical deductive reasoning studies from a number of apparently obvious propositions of great generality. Definitions originating in the 1970’s the 1880 and the 1940’sexhibit in quasi epigrammatic form the progress of economics as a social science since the middle of the eighteen century. Adam Smith defined it as “the science of wealth” for his its scope was limited to the study of the nature, causes, and external aspects of the wealth of nations (Hoselitz 128-157).

Understanding economics enables us to control our lives better. The word "economics" comes from Greek, and it means, "to manage one's household." This is an apt term and it should be applied on three levels: the management of one's personal

finances; the conduct of one's business, whether it be as a small business owner or a member of a union; and, the management of the economy in general. When viewed in this light, economics is an extremely useful tool in the conduct of daily living. Economic thinking is a tool or a way of thinking about the most effective way to produce and distribute goods and services. To be truly useful, economic thinking must be concerned with concepts, questions, and issues. Once known as the "dismal science," economics presents itself as a challenging, vital subject and a necessary tool in every-day living. To teach it successfully, one must understand its nature and teach it meaningfully (Eulie 106-108).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several user studies have been carried out by students, research scholars, and teachers of different institutes, colleges and universities all around the world, focusing on the use of e-resources. In this regard, Korobili et al. (91-105) highlighted that, the great majority of the faculty of Technical Educational Institution (TEI), Thessaloniki, Greece use printed sources more than e-sources, but they also use e-sources quite frequently. Use is mostly of books, web sites and printed journals. The results of this study further indicated that the use of e-sources is higher in the School of Business Administration and Economics among those who hold a PhD degree. Beard et al. (7-17) in their study on, “The impact of e-resources at Bournemouth University 2004/2006” observes that the use of and enthusiasm for, electronic resources is widespread amongst students and staff of Bournemouth University (UK). Kanungo (7-18) highlighted the purposes and frequency of use of Internet by the social scientists, and their methods of locating, accessing and using information on the Internet at IGNOU. Mahamed (23-31) unfolded the popularity of ICT-based resources and services among the special library users of Kerala (India). In another typical study, Weng-Shung (329-48) found that the efficiency and capacity of electronic learning could be comprehensively enhanced through the application of self-organizing map/data mining methods. Ani and Ahiauzu (504-15) found that there is a high level of developing electronic information resources in Nigerian University libraries through direct subscription for electronic information than conversion of information into electronic form in the library through computerization and digitization. Atakan (249-59) in his study on, “An evaluation of the second survey on electronic databases usage at Ankara University Digital Library” found that the most preferred databases among the faculty members were Web of Science, Science

Direct, and EBSCO. For his part, Anderson (4-8) highlighted that professional forums provide useful bibliographic information regarding e-resources for faculty and collection officers alike; additionally they provide a useful starting point for discussions of desired learning outcomes, leading to better support for technology/curricular needs. Swain and Panda (74-85) in the process of evaluating librarians opinion found that, availability of some key online databases are exclusively confined to only a selected few business school libraries of Orissa (India) and the internet-based e-resources are being well used compared with CD-ROM databases. Solis and Hampton (81-91) in their findings expressed that students and professors appreciate course-specific web pages that provide access to library resources that relate directly to class assignments.

Oduwole and Akpati (228-33) in their study have clearly demonstrated the acceptability of electronic information by library clientele at the university of Agriculture library, Abeokuta. A greater percentage of users find electronic information to a greater or lesser extent easy to use (86 per cent); users do not need previous training in the use of information technology; most users were satisfied with their search outputs; the essential electronic agricultural library is the most widely consulted automated service database by library users. The study also revealed that the small number of terminals available for searchers constitutes a major constraint to use of automated system by users. Use of the internet for academic research by Agricultural Scientist has improved their research output. Sharma (25-33) in his study on Agriculture universities observed that the e-resources, which are available in the LAN setting, should be made available at the residences of faculty and researchers to enhance their research potential. Tahir et al. (122-36) conducted a study on use of electronic information resources at the Punjab University. The results of this study reveal that the availability of electronic resources like electronic databases (online and CD-ROM), electronic journals, digital books, internet, and e-mail has a great impact on the information-seeking behaviour of the humanists. They face many problems in retrieving and using electronic facilities, but they perceive that their work has become easier with technology. Noh (41-52) had done a study on developing evaluation criteria for electronic resources in evaluation indicators of libraries. This study aimed to improve the current state of electronic resource evaluation in libraries. While the use of Web DB, e-book, e-journal, and other e-resources such as CD-ROM, DVD, and micro materials is increasing in libraries, their use is not comprehensively factored into the general evaluation of libraries and may diminish the

reliability of the overall results. The present study proposes an improved and detailed evaluation mechanism specifically for e-resources in university library evaluations. Bhatt and Rana(496-511) studied E-information usage among engineering academics in India with special reference to Rajasthan State. The main objective of this paper is to analyse and evaluate the use of e-resources by the engineering academics of Rajasthan state. It aims to consider the various factors of e-resources usage such as purposes, impact, importance, problems, acceptance, and satisfaction with e-resources. Min and Yi (214-27) have done E-resources, services and user surveys in Tsinghua University Library. The paper aims to provide an overview of the e-resources and services in Tsinghua University Library, Beijing, and describe five campus-wide user surveys. It states how these user surveys play an important role in service quality enhancement. However, the results of the present study may add another contribution to the corpus of available literature.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The academic scenario, over the years, has undergone a fabulous change assuming new dimensions influenced by the technology driven applications. Economics education is no exception to this. Information technology has influenced the very nature of economics institute libraries. They are undergoing significant changes today not only in outlook but also in function, services, methods and techniques for collection development, processing and dissemination of information. In the present era, economics colleges are playing an important role in imparting education. The economists, who are the products of these colleges, require the latest information in their respective fields and by using the e-resources they can achieve their educational goals effectively and efficiently. The e-resources are inseparable part of today's economics educational system. Economics colleges invest a good deal of amount on providing this facility to both the teachers and students. Thus, the major question remains how well the students' community, in particular, is acquainted with the flood of electronic resources available via the channels of online databases, e-journals consortiums, open access free journals, web sites, blogs, wikis, etc. Hence, the present study attempts to find out the extent of students' curiosity in the use of e-information for supplementing their scholarly needs with some constructive suggestions for the effective utilization of electronic resources in the respective economics schools of Delhi. This is an important area of study in this

challenging environment when technological advancements are so fast and documentation of information sources related to economics is not available in any public domain.. Although all the surveys include faculty members among their participants, in many cases, these surveys examined the use of internet, word processors, e-journals and so forth. Few of them were targeted towards faculty as well as students and their awareness to the availability and use of library's electronic resources thus it is pertinent and important to study the access and use of e-resources by the faculty members and students in the field of economics in Delhi.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study will be conducted keeping in view the following objectives:

1. To identify the availability of e-resources in the open domain and the provision of subscribed e-resources by the libraries in the field of economics in select universities under study.

2. To study the use pattern of various categories of e-resources in economics by the faculty members and students in select universities under study.

3. To examine the use of e-journals through subscribed online databases by faculty members and the students in select universities and also to find out the core periodicals in the field under study.

4. To study the use of e-journals available in the open domain by faculty members and the students in economics in select universities under study.

5. To identify the problems faced by users in using e-resources and to give suggestions for improvement and also to propose the design of a model subject gateway in the field of economics.

5. HYPOTHESES (Tentative)

The study will try to test the following hypotheses:

1. Availability of e-resources published abroad is higher than the e-resources published in India and most university libraries are subscribing prominent e-resources through consortium approach.

2. Most frequently used categories of e-resources in the field of economics are e-journals and other categories are less used.

3. There is no significant difference in the use pattern of e-journals by faculty members and students in economics through subscribed online databases in select universities under study.

4. There is significant difference in the use of e-journals available in open domain in the field of economics by faculty members and students in select universities under study.

6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The academic scenario, over the years, has undergone a fabulous change assuming new dimensions influenced by the technology driven applications, economics education is no exception to this. The economists, who are the products of these colleges, require the latest information in their respective fields and by using the e-resources they can achieve their educational goals effectively and efficiently. The e-resources are inseparable part of today's economics educational system. The study focuses on access and use of e-resources by the faculty members and students in the field of economics in Delhi. The study is restricted to faculty members, research scholars and post graduate students from the following three universities of Delhi.

1. University of Delhi (DU), Delhi

2. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi

3. Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), New Delhi

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study will cover only faculty members, research scholars and post graduate students from three universities from Delhi. The study will exclude all under graduate students.

8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology can be stated as a set of procedures followed for carrying out any systematic investigation. It is a specific way of performing an operation, to study a phenomenon or to find a solution to a problem. It is a way to systematically solve the research problem by logically adopting various steps. Methodology helps to understand not only the products of scientific inquiry but the process itself.

The methodology adopted for the study will include survey approach in which questionnaire will be used as a data gathering tool from faculty members and students from three universities under study. In addition to the questionnaire method, interview and observation methods will also be used to collect required information to supplement to the questionnaire method and to bring more clarity to the data, which will be essential and will be used for analysis and interpretation of the data. Designing of the gateway for economics e resources is an information consolidation product. It will include identification of several information items available in internet using various search engines, selection of information sources, categorization and arrangement of e –resources. Finally presentation of sources i.e. model subject gateway designed.

9. CITATION STYLE

The citation standard used for giving citations & references and for the compilation of bibliography will be MLA citation style: MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Paper, 7th edition.

10. CHAPTERISATION (Tentative)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 4: Growth and Development of Economics

Chapter 5: E-resources: An Overview

Chapter 6: Analysis of Data and Interpretation

Chapter 7: Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

Appendix: Bibliography

References

Anderson, F. E. "Using Professional Forums to Assess Historians' E-resource Needs." *Collection Building* 21.1 (2009): 4-8. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Ani, O. E., and B. Ahiauzu. "Towards Effective Development of Electronic Information Resources in Nigerian University Libraries." *Library Management* 29.6 (2008): 504-15. Web.

Atakan, C. "An Evaluation of the Second Survey on Electronic Databases Usage at Ankara University Digital Library." *The Electronic Library* 26.2 (2008): 249-59. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Beard, J., P. Dale, and J. Hutchins. "The Impact of E-resources at Bournemouth University 2004/2006"." *Performance Measurement and Metrics* 8.1 (2007): 7-17. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Bhatt, Sunil, and Madan Singh Rana. "E-information Usage among Engineering Academics in India with Special Reference to Rajasthan State." *Library Hi Tech* 29.3 (2011): 496-511. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Eulie, Joseph. "Teaching Economics: Challenge for the 1980s." *The Clearing House* 56.3 (1982): 106-08. *JSTOR*. Web. <http://http://www.jstor.org/stable/30185532 .>.

Hoselitz, Bert F., ed. "Economics." *A Reader's Guide to the Social Sciences*. Ed. Bert F. Hoselitz. 2nd ed. New York: Free, 1965. 128-57. Print.

Kanungo, N. T. "Use of Internet in the Scholarly Communication of Social Scientists: A Case Study of IGNOU." *Annals of Library and Information Studies* 54 (2007): 7-18. Web.

Korobili, S., L. Tilikidou, and A. Delistavrou. "Factors That Influence the Use of Library Resources by Faculty Members." *Library Review* 55.2 (2006): 91-105. Web.

Mahamed, H. K. "Use of ICT-based Resources and Services in Special Libraries in Kerala." *Annals of Library and Information Studies* 54 (2007): 23-31. Web.

Min, Shao, and Yang Yi. "E-resources, Services and User Surveys in Tsinghua University Library." *Program: Electronic Library and Information Systems* 44.4 (2010): 214-27. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Noh, Younghee. "A Study on Developing Evaluation Criteria for Electronic Resources in Evaluation Indicators of Libraries." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 36.1 (2010): 41-52. *Scopus*. Web. <http://www.scopus.com>.

Oduwole, A. A., and C. B. Akpati. "Accessibility and Retrieval of Electronic Information at the University of Agriculture Library, Abeokuta, Nigeria." *Library Review* 52.5 (2003): 228-33. Web.

Saye, J.D. "The Organization of Electronic Resources in the Library and Information Science Curriculum", *OCLC Systems and Services* 17. 2 (2001): 71-81. *Emerald insight*. Web. http://www.emeraldinsight.com.

Sharifabadi, S.R. "How digital libraries can support e-learning."*The Electronic Library* 24. 3(2008):389-40. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Sharma, C. "Use and Impact of E-resources at Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (India): A Case Study." *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship* 1.10 (2009): 25-33. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Sharma, Chetan, Lakhpat Singh, and Ritu Sharma. "Usage and Acceptability of E-resources in National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) and National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR), India." *The Electronic Library* 29.6 (2011): 803-16. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Solis, J., and E. M. Hampton. "Promoting a Comprehensive View of Library Resources in a Course Management System." *New Library World* 110.1 (2009): 81-91. *Science direct*. Web. <http://WWW. science direct.com>.

Swain, D. K., and C. K. Panda. "“Use of Electronic Resources in Business School Libraries of an Indian State: A Study of Librarians’ Opinion." *The Electronic Library* 27.1 (2009): 74-85. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Swain, Dillip K. "Students’ Keenness on Use of E-resources." *The Electronic Library* 28.4 (2010): 580-91. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Tahir, M., K. Mahmood, and F. Shafique. "Use of Electronic Information Resources and Facilities by Humanities Scholars." *The Electronic Library* 28.1 (2010): 122-36. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.

Wen-Shung, D. "Effective E-learning Recommendation System Based on Self-organizing Maps and Association Mining." *The Electronic Library* 26.3 (2008): 329-48. *Emerald insight*. Web. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>.